

AN
A P P E A L
TO THE
CANDOUR AND JUSTICE
OF THE
PEOPLE OF ENGLAND,
IN BEHALF OF THE
WEST INDIA MERCHANTS
AND
P L A N T E R S,
FOUNDED ON
PLAIN FACTS AND INCONTROVERTIBLE ARGUMENTS.

Audi alteram Partem.

L O N D O N:

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1792.

INTRODUCTION.

THE clamour which has been so industriously raised against the WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS ; the unfair arts employed to calumniate, and render them odious in the eyes of the public ; and the indefatigable zeal of their enemies to accomplish their utter ruin, call aloud for inquiry into the nature of the crimes alledged against them.

HUMANITY is the *boasted* pretext of those who have founded the *war-hoop* for their destruction; and if the interests of HUMANITY be *really* involved in the measures pursued against them--who is there that would withhold his aid in forwarding those measures? To the *candid* and *dispassionate*, then, let the APPEAL be made--Let us not deny to the Colonists that privilege which is freely afforded to the greatest criminals--*Let us grant them a fair bearing*--and if the allegations of their adversaries prove well-founded, consign them over to that infamy which should always brand such atrocious violators of every principle that makes man happy on earth, and warrants him in extending his views to Heaven.

It must be confessed, that the impression, caused by those tales of *cruelty* which were *doled* out with so much *pathos* in a *certain* Assembly, and since sent into circulation with such *laudable industry*, has rendered it no easy task to bring back the public mind to a *calm* and *impartial examination* of the *real state* of the question. The characteristic good sense of this country seems borne down by a torrent of furious invective, which has been poured forth against the WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS, and which portends more calamitous consequences to the Colonies than even their native hurricanes.

Would not a foreigner, unacquainted with our country, conclude, that WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS were a distinct race of beings, who had
assumed

assumed the British character only to disgrace it, and whose extirpation was become an act of national justice ?

Who, then, let us ask, are the objects of this virulent persecution ? Are they not the brothers of our blood ? Do we not, in the face of each of them, discern kindred features ? Are they not BRITONS, or the descendants of BRITONS, whose morals have been formed, and whose manners have been fashioned among ourselves ? —and whose fortunes, without *a single exception*, are spent in this country ?

In the name of common sense, then, how happens it that *they* alone should be holden up as the TARGETS for every canting hypocrite, and fanatical enthusiast, to shoot his bolt at with impunity ?

Why are they made the scape-goats, to bear the odium and the guilt, (if, in fact, guilt or odium really exist) which is common to the whole nation, and to all Europe ?

Are the WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS the ADVOCATES of SLAVERY ? Had they been more acquiescing and servile in their principles, *the Hand of Power had not been raised against them.* It is their free and independent spirit, on the contrary, which constitutes their greatest crime in the eye of *certain persons.*

If the AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE be really fraught with all those horrors, and productive of all those enormities, which the *distempered imaginations* of the ABOLITIONISTS have painted in such glowing colours, are the BRITISH WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS
alone

alone censurable for continuing it ? And is no blame to be imputed to the GOVERNMENT which originally established, and to the LEGISLATURE and the NATION, which have invariably functioned that Trade for more than a century ?

But it is not ; and the very reverse of the statements made by the *great APOSTLE* of REFORM appear incontrovertibly by a perusal of the following Speeches.

Although the facts stated in these speeches, as well as the force and fairness of the arguments with which those facts are maintained, must carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind, yet we ought not wholly to overlook the *characters* of the speakers.

To suppose that such men as Mr. BAILLIE and Mr. VAUGHAN could plead in favour of MURDER, RAPINE, and all the other crimes
imputed

imputed to the AFRICAN MERCHANTS and the WEST INDIA PLANTERS, is an idea so ridiculous, that it deserves to sink under the silence of contempt, if it did not appear in some degree necessary to mark it as an uncommon instance of audacious criminality.

The great use of general character is to serve as a shield against particular accusations ; and surely this observation was never more applicable than to those two Gentlemen, whose testimony is the best refutation of all the calumnies daily vomited forth against the Proprietors of Slaves in the West Indies.

Perhaps the Commercial World does not furnish two instances in whom so much extensive mercantile knowledge, (local as well as general) is combined with the purest integrity, and the soundest intellect,

to stamp authenticity on opinion, as in those before us. Shall we, then, *bold at nought* the opinions of such characters, and yield *implicit faith* to the rhapsodies of uninformed (however otherwise *illuminated and sanctified*) speculators and enthusiasts?

To MR. BAILLIE and MR. VAUGHAN we, therefore, confidently refer the people of England for accurate information on this MOMENTOUS QUESTION.

The subject demands an investigation very different from that which it *has* received—and as the question of the ABOLITION affects not only the property of the WEST INDIA PLANTERS and MERCHANTS, (considering them as a distinct body) BUT INVOLVES IN ITS CONSEQUENCES THE MARINE, THE MANUFACTURES, THE TRADE, AND THE FINANCES OF ENGLAND—

it surely becomes us *to examine it seriously, and judge it dispassionately.*

Having maturely weighed the information, communicated with so much candour by these Gentlemen, our readers will find, in the speech of COLONEL TARLETON, a just and striking picture of the nefarious arts employed by the Abolitionists to impose upon the public credulity, and of the ruin which must inevitably *result* from the success of their measures.

But there is ANOTHER, whose sentiments on this subject command the most serious attention, the splendid display of whose abilities on the MOTION FOR THE ABOLITION of the SLAVE TRADE, will be admired as a master-piece of oratorical excellence and political wisdom, when the AGITA-

TORS who occasioned it shall have sunk into their *original* state of obscurity.

Without entering into the various merits of that speech, which so much surpasses our feeble praise, we cannot resist the impulse of our feelings, while we introduce to our Readers this EXTRAORDINARY MAN, who, to the vigorous imagination of youth, joins the *solidity* of experienced age—*Tu Marcellus eris.*

Mr. JENKINSON is the eldest son of LORD HAWKESBURY, and with the TITLES and FORTUNES of his father, will inherit *that* which is of infinitely more importance—he will inherit his profound understanding.

The annals of this country do not present us with an instance of so uncommon a display of genius and judgement as Mr. JENKINSON

son exhibited when he delivered his sentiments on the Russian Armament. Every person present, of whatever party, *felt* that *he alone*, on the ministerial side, treated the subject like a statesman; who scorning to shelter himself under the *stale* and *wretched* (would we could say, *exploded*) plea of *confidence*, boldly stood forward to vindicate the measure on the ground of state policy and national wisdom.

How far the reasons he assigned on that occasion were just, it is not our business to inquire; but feeling the impressions which efforts so extraordinary made at the moment, and considering Mr. JENKINSON as the best qualified, *by natural and acquired endowments*, to form a just estimate of the true interests of the British Empire, we quote his opinions
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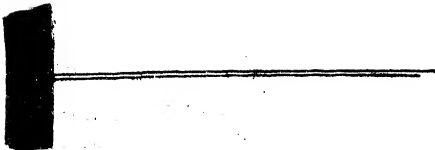
on the SLAVE TRADE with pride, and, aware of their irresistible weight, oppose them against the wild declamation and infuriated rant of enthusiasts and speculatists. *He* has not studied the interest of this country either in *conventicles* or *at love feasts*. *He* has learnt it from the MAN who made the TRADE and NAVIGATION of GREAT BRITAIN the primary pursuit of his political life, and to whose wise and salutary laws that trade and navigation stand indebted for their most valuable securities.

Consistently with those wise precepts inculcated into his mind by the Master, so deeply skilled in the science of politics, Mr. JENKINSON resisted, with all his powers, the ABOLITION of the AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, a measure which he knew was fraught with the
most

most fatal consequences to the dearest interests of this country ; and although his speech failed in producing a due effect where it was delivered, yet it may draw after it one good consequence ; it will remain as a monument to *instruct* future generations, should they hereafter (*quod Deus avertat !*) *contemplate* the widely-extended ruin which those INNOVATORS and ZEALOTS, now at war against the British West India Colonies, must inevitably occasion, were they TO GATHER IN THEIR HARVEST.

Painful, indeed, to those Colonists must be the reflection, that the Minister, whose *infant* fame they so fondly cherished, and whose earliest exertions they fostered with so much zeal, should now devote them to irretrievable ruin, not without an *ostentati-*
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ous parade unworthy of a great mind—which never insults even the victims of its ambition or policy.



SLAVE TRADE.

ON the 2d of April, 1792, the several PETITIONS for the ABOLITION, presented to the COMMONS, were referred to the consideration of the Committee of the whole House, appointed to discuss the subject, Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN in the Chair.

Mr. WILBERFORCE declaimed at great length against the Slave Trade, and concluded by moving—

“ That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the trade carried on by British Subjects, for the purpose of obtain-

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“ ing Slaves on the coast of Africa, ought
 “ to be abolished.”

Were this motion carried, Mr. WIL-
 BERFORCE gave notice, that he intended
 to follow it up by another—

“ That the Chairman be directed to
 “ move the House for leave to bring in
 “ a bill for the Abolition of the Slave
 “ Trade.” In this bill the House might
 give time for that Abolition.

Mr. BAILLIE desired that the Petition
 of the WEST INDIA PLANTERS and
 MERCHANTS should be read—

*The PETITION of the Planters, Mer-
 chants, Mortgagees, Annuitants, and
 Others, concerned in the West India Co-
 lonies, to the Honourable the HOUSE of
 COMMONS of Great Britain in Parlia-
 ment assembled,*

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT your petitioners learn, with
 much concern, that the question for the
 Abolition

Abolition of the Slave Trade is again proposed for deliberation in this Honourable House.

That the system of peopling the West India Colonies with Negroes, obtained by purchase in Africa, has long and repeatedly received the national sanction, That the acts of 9 and 10 Will. III. c. 26, and 23 Geo. II. c. 31, not only declare the African Trade to be highly beneficial, and very advantageous to this kingdom, but “ *necessary* for supplying the Colonies with a *sufficient number* of Negroes at *reasonable rates*.” That every stimulant, held out by Government for the cultivation of the West India Colonies, has directly sanctioned the importation of Negroes, as the means *necessary* to that end; that the islands, it is well known, are not yet possessed of such *sufficient number of Negroes* for cultivating their lands as is above-mentioned; that this is particularly true respecting the ceded islands, where the lands were bought from Government, not only upon

the faith of liberty and encouragement given to purchase Negroes, but with a clause of forfeiture, in case the cultivation of the same was not completed within a certain period ; that the Negroes already possessed by the Colonists require to be constantly recruited ; that the existing proportion of female Negroes, which is inferior to that of the males, and the present manners of the Negroes, are each unfavourable to population ; that, in case of any unusual loss of Negroes, by disease, or other accidents, the only means of supplying the vacancy (which, by the nature of things, must otherwise grow more considerable and distressing) depends upon new importations from Africa. That a multitude of Acts of Parliament, both ancient and modern, besides those above cited, as well as treaties of peace, or of commerce, and other national measures and documents, have alike concurred to indicate the system of this country upon the present subject. That the West India Colonists have had

too high an opinion of the public faith, not to suppose that such authorities ought to form an unerring guide and solid security to them ; and that on these authorities, therefore, have they hitherto, fearlessly embarked their fortunes in distant climes.

That every circumstance, respecting the purchasing Negroes and the transporting of them to the islands by British traders, and their treatment in the islands, has, by universal acknowledgement, and especially of late, changed for the better ; so as to afford no new argument on this head, unless on behalf of the Colonies.

That nothing to affect the question has occurred, since the late decision by this Honourable House upon the evidence taken thereon ; excepting, first, the partial selection and perversion of that evidence without doors, in order to deceive the nation ; and, secondly, the melancholy effects arising from continuing to agitate the question.

That the first circumstance has occasioned various Petitions to be presented to this Honourable House, some of which have been improperly obtained and signed, and which, in general, have proceeded from persons either comparatively few in number, or else who have had no means of becoming acquainted with the facts in question, or with that voluminous evidence, upon which this Honourable House had formed its first decision. That extracts from this evidence, confined in general to one side of the question, (and, in particular, having no reference to that mass of authority on the other side, furnished by admirals, governors, and others in official situations, unless to discredit it,) have been circulated in pamphlets, sold at the lowest prices, or even given *gratis*, wherever they could produce effect; and that, to these extracts, have been added various artful misrepresentations. That, if your Petitioners have not, in time, exerted themselves in opposition to these measures, it is because they thought it impossible that

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men, avowing the pursuit of humanity and duty, could be capable of such unwarrantable and cruel proceedings; and because your Petitioners trusted to the justice of their cause and to the fairness of their conduct, as well as to the wisdom, the known information, and the declared opinion, of this Honourable House.

That, with respect to the second circumstance which has lately occurred, namely, the actual evils consequent upon the discussion of this question; without alluding to the present discredit and apprehension affecting all colonial property, they are to be found in the devastation of the largest of the French West-India Colonies, with the mutual slaughter of its inhabitants. That this terrible disaster was preceded by a revolt in the English Colony of Dominica, and followed by the project of another in Jamaica, happily stifled in its origin.

That your Petitioners trust that these *new* circumstances are *not* such as to be likely to induce this Honourable House to change its first opinions.

That

That it is notorious that the Negroes now consider an Abolition of the Slave Trade to be synonymous with a general emancipation ; and that, should the abolition take place, they will, in consequence of this idea, become (in the most favourable event) less contented and less happy in their situation ; but, most probably, they will be urged to acts of desperate revolt, and involve themselves, their masters, and the Colonies, in one common ruin.

That your Petitioners will not here state the importance of the Sugar Colonies to the manufactures, agriculture, commerce, navigation, and revenue, of the British empire ; as being, they hope, already sufficiently felt by this Honourable House, as well as acknowledged by their adversaries. That their adversaries, indeed, sensible that they could not otherwise have weight with this Honourable House, pretend that these objects not only will not be injured, but will even be aided, by an Abolition of the Slave Trade ;

Trade ; but your Petitioners humbly hope so far to have credit with this Honourable House for a right understanding of their own concerns, after a longer and closer investigation of them than can have fallen to the share of their opponents, and likewise after the calumny they have experienced for persisting in their opinions, and the consequent combination which has arisen against the consumption of their produce, as to be supposed not likely to be mistaken upon a subject in which they are so deeply interested ; and, if your Petitioners do not deceive themselves herein, it is then impossible that a stake of seventy millions sterling, in the West Indies, can be affected without affecting every Member of this Honourable House, as well as the nation at large.

That your Petitioners, therefore, will humbly conclude by praying, first, either that the discussion of this question may now be terminated in such a manner as may discourage its revival (the suspension of the decision being almost equal in mischief to an abolition of the trade ;) or, secondly,

condly, if it shall be decided that the Slave Trade shall be abolished, that, in that case, the colonists, their creditors, and others connected with the West Indies, may be fully indemnified; as it cannot be the design, even if it should fall within the competence of this Honourable House, when pursuing a supposed measure of humanity on one side, to neglect the acknowledged claim, not only of humanity, but of justice also, on the side of the colonists; or to cause them to become victims to the encouragement given to the present system of West India colonization, during above a century and a half, and to owe their ruin to no other circumstance than to a mistaken confidence in the good faith and steady conduct of the Legislature of Great Britain.*

London, March 1792.

WHEN the Clerk had done reading, Mr. BAILLIE rose, and expressed, in terms

* *Summum jus, summa injuria*—In endeavouring to obtain *all possible*, nay *all imaginable* justice to the Africans, the Abolitionists seem to regard with a very “unequal eye,” the injustice they are doing, or attempting to do, to the British Colonists.

of modesty, (which his speech proved to be superfluous) the reluctance he felt in obtruding himself on the attention of the House—but, circumstanced as he was, as Agent for one of the most valuable West India Islands*) he found himself impelled, by the superior calls of duty, to sacrifice his private feelings, and declare his sentiments on the question—which he considered one of the most important that had ever occupied the attention of Parliament. He felt it the more necessary to declare his opinion, because a long residence in the West Indies, where he had passed the most active part of his life, had given him an opportunity of forming a better judgement on the subject, than those Gentlemen who had brought it forward—and feeling, as he did, as strong an interest, as any Gentleman in that House, for the trade, the manufactures, and the navigation of Great Britain, all which were vitally involved *in the novel and speculating doctrines of the day*, he

* Mr. BAILLIE is Agent for the Island of Grenada.

could not refrain from coming forward, and declaring his sentiments. But, says Mr. BAILLIE, it is not only a considerable portion of the trade and navigation of this country, BUT THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THOSE COLONIES, *which have been established, cherished, and supported, under various Acts of Parliament*, that is at stake.

Mr. BAILLIE then proceeded to analyze the characters of those persons who had, with so much zeal and industry, agitated this question, which, he very justly termed, *unfortunate and impolitic*—and who had so artfully contrived to devolve the management of the business on an honourable Gentleman, for whose private virtues he professed the highest respect.

This Gentleman's arguments, Mr. BAILLIE observed, upon a former occasion, operated upon the Minister's mind, and at the same time extended their effects to the mind of the Right Honourable Gentleman, who makes so very conspicuous a figure upon the opposite side of the House: there is, added he, neither in nor out of Parliament, a
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man who is a greater admirer of the incomparable and brilliant abilities of the Right Hon. Gentlemen than I am ; I consider them an ornament to this House, and an ornament to their country ; but however I may be disposed to bow, with all due submission to their opinions upon other occasions, yet, upon the present question *I differ with them most essentially* ; I mean, I differ with the opinions they gave upon the former investigation of the question ; for, from the circumstances that have occurred in the History of the Western World, since the close of the last Session of Parliament, I flatter myself that they are now made fully sensible of its evil, and dangerous tendency. However, to come to the Right Hon. Gentlemen in *ministerial capacities*, I do maintain, that the part they acted, when the question was debated in Parliament last year, was *unexpected, very unbecoming their high characters, and not at all consistent with the principles upon which, in my humble opinion, great Statesmen ought to act.*

I conceive it to be the indispensable duty of men in high situations, and who are, or *may* be, intrusted with the lead of public affairs, to consider not only the general interest of the State, but of individuals, with a most scrupulous and attentive eye, and to see that the good policy of the country, and the good understanding that has long subsisted betwixt Government and our distant colonies, under the sanction and protection of various Acts of Parliament, should not be disturbed, and broken in upon, *by such a wild, impracticable, and visionary scheme*, as the present question for abolishing the AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

I was induced to flatter myself, that the friends and promoters of the Abolition would have contented themselves with the mischiefs that had already arisen, in consequence of the agitation of that *unfortunate measure*, and that the *sanguinary dispositions* of a certain description of people, would have been fully satiated with the innocent blood that has already
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been spilt ; but, alas ! that is not likely to be the case ; *many of them have been known, and heard, to exult at the calamities we daily read of, so that, in all probability, the mischief is only done in part, and nothing less than the total desolation and destruction of the British West India Colonies can content them.*

I have in my hand a small pamphlet, printed and published by order of the West India Planters and Merchants, for the use and information of the Members of both Houses of Parliament.

It contains the speech of the Deputies of ST. DOMINGO to the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of FRANCE, and also the speech of M. *Bostrand*, the late Minister of the Marine and Colonies, upon the insurrection of the Negroes in that island.

If the DESTRUCTION OF THE MOST EXTENSIVE AND MOST VALUABLE COLONY IN THE WORLD, THE MASSACRE OF ITS INHABITANTS, THE RAVAGING THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PART OF THE CREATION IN A MANNER HITHERTO UNKNOWN AND UN-

HEARD

HEARD OF, AND THE UNNATURAL MURDER OF FATHERS BY THE HANDS OF THEIR OWN CHILDREN, ARE SUFFICIENT TO OPERATE UPON THE FEELINGS OF HUMANITY, there is not, I am persuaded, a Gentleman in this House, who can withstand the shock ; but to *me*, who have a personal knowledge of the theatre of these dreadful scenes, and who (though an Englishman, and at St. Domingo in the very height of the glorious and successful war that was carried on under the auspices of that great and immortal Statesman, Lord Chatham) received distinguished marks of kindness and hospitality from many of those families, who by the late melancholy events have been consigned to oblivion, they are doubly afflicting ; and when I bring to my recollection that the causes of all these calamities have *originated* in Great Britain, I am overwhelmed with sorrow.

The island of St. Domingo, Mr. Chairman, is as large as the kingdom of England.

In

In the year 1789, the imports into that colony from France exceeded three millions sterling, exclusive of near thirty thousand Negroes, which, at a very moderate valuation, may be estimated at two millions sterling more. The exports from the colony, in the same year, amounted in value to upwards of six millions sterling, and their trade gave employment to three hundred thousand tons of shipping, and thirty thousand seamen. These circumstances I take the liberty of stating to this House, as a confirmation of the testimony I gave before the Committee of the House of Commons, when sitting on the Slave Trade in the year 1790.

In my evidence on that occasion, I gave it as my opinion, that the African and West India trade of France generally employed between forty and fifty thousand seamen; and when it is considered, that the produce of St. Domingo is hardly equal to two-thirds of the whole produce of the French West India Colonies, I flatter myself it will be admitted,

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that I have not exceeded in my calculation.

Having said so much, by way of introduction, I must now beg leave to make some observations upon the speech of the Honourable Gentleman who brought it forward, which I will endeavour to do in as concise a manner as possible.

I will afterwards take the liberty of calling the attention of the Committee to the value and importance of the West India and African trade to Great Britain ; to some of the authorities under which the West India Colonies and African trade were established ; to their dependence on each other, and to the INJUSTICE AND IMPOLICY OF THE PRESENT ATTEMPT TO ABOLISH THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

The Honourable Gentleman who brought forward this question, has made use of nearly the same arguments on the present occasion, which he did upon the discussion of the subject last year. And though it may be considered tedious to go into the particulars of a mass of evidence, which,

which, I take it for granted, every Member of the House is master of, yet it is incumbent on me, speaking generally on the subject, to take notice of the very *partial manner* in which the Honourable Gentleman and his friends have garbled from the whole body such particular parts of the evidence as were suited to answer their own purposes; and with what an *indecent indifference* they have treated the testimony of the several great and respectable characters who voluntarily came forward, on our part, to remove that load of calumny and abuse, which has so illiberally, and so wantonly been thrown out against every person connected with the West Indies.

I am very far from denying that many acts of inhumanity have been committed in the transportation of Slaves from the Coast of Africa to the West Indies, and in the treatment of those Negroes after they had been landed on our islands; but as I believe, Sir, that the failings and frailties of human nature prevail generally, in

pretty much the same proportion, all over the world (I mean among civilized nations) it would be very unreasonable to expect, among that class of people concerned in the African trade, or among the inhabitants of the British West India Islands, a degree of moral perfection that is not to be found in Great Britain itself.

Mr. BAILLIE illustrated this part of his argument in a very forcible manner—He submitted it to the candour of Gentlemen, whether the records of the Old Bailey ought to be considered as a fair criterion by which to estimate the character of the English nation. And after urging this, asked those enthusiastic Abolitionists, if there have not been committed, in this great and opulent city, acts of as shocking, as base, and as barbarous a nature, as any contained in the great mass of evidence now lying on the table?

I have lived, continued he, sixteen years in the West Indies, and notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary, I do declare, in the most solemn

solemn manner, that I consider the Negroes in the British West India Islands, to be in as COMFORTABLE A STATE, AS THE LOWER ORDERS OF MANKIND IN ANY COUNTRY IN EUROPE.

Before the agitation of this question, their minds were at ease, and they were perfectly contented with their situation; the confidence between them and their masters was so unbounded, that (except in the stores where sugar, rum, provisions, and cloathing were generally lodged) no locks were ever used. Such, I can assure the Committee, was the general disposition of the Negroes in the British West India Islands in the year 1776, when I returned to Europe, and they continued in that happy state until the enemies of the Colonies came forward and propagated, with so much zeal and industry, the principles of their *pernicious doctrines*. But I am sorry to say, the case is woefully reversed at present: the West India Islands are filled with emissaries and inflammatory publications by the friends of
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the Abolition. An universal distress prevails, and instead of being in that happy state which I have represented, every countenance carries the appearance of anxiety and care: and there is not an estate without a *depôt* for arms lodged, for the very purpose of destroying those, whose lives every principle of humanity and interest lead us to preserve. Some Gentlemen may probably consider these precautions as consistent with the general system of oppression with which we are charged; but I, *who have been in situations of danger, and know something of the feelings of men upon such occasions*, can assure the Honourable Gentlemen, that self-preservation foregoes all other considerations.

Having said so much, Mr. Chairman, of the civil state of the Negroes in our islands, I must now advert to their religious state, beginning with the Island of Grenada, where my property chiefly lies.

That Island, Sir, was ceded to Great Britain at the peace of 1763. Upon our

taking possession of it, the Negroes were found baptized, and instructed in such of the principles of the Roman Catholic faith, as were suited to their humble capacities. That religion now universally prevails ; for as new Negroes were imported from Africa, they naturally adopted the religious principles of those they found upon the island, and the Priests, who are always extremely industrious in their vocations, never failed of giving them the necessary instructions ; so that, in the course of twelve months, they are generally impressed with very tolerable ideas of religious duties. There being no Protestant Clergyman at that time in the colony, the Gentlemen of the island gave every possible encouragement to the religious pursuits of their Negroes. One half of the number on each estate were permitted to go every Sunday to public Mass, and the mornings and evenings of the Sabbath were dedicated to religious worship on the Plantations, where the whole Gang assembled at the dwelling-house,

house, or mansion, and went through the service of the Church of Rome, under the immediate eye of the Master or Manager, in a manner, and with a fervency, that would have done credit to more civilized societies.

Mr. BAILLIE (professing his own implicit belief in the Sacred Scriptures) declared, that, on those occasions, he entertained sentiments of the most fervent devotion, and such as would not dishonour the most pure and pious mind. As to the religious state of the Negroes in the islands where the Roman Catholic faith does not prevail, Mr. BAILLIE remarked, that he was sorry he could not say much. The Moravian Missionaries have of late made great progress in opening the minds of the Negroes, in our old islands, to a sense of religious duties; but there is among the Clergy of our established Church a degree of *inattention and indolence very much to be lamented, and which is very unpardonable on their part, considering the ample provision that is made*
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for them by the legislatures of our several Colonies.

The pious and respectable Character, who at present so worthily fills the See of London, is, by what I am informed, extremely attentive to the morals and characters of such men as are admitted into holy orders, for the purpose of occupying the livings in the West India Islands; and I am perfectly convinced, that all possible means would be made use of by that most excellent Prelate, to extend the blessings of the Gospel to the minds of the Negroes on all our Plantations. Mr. BAILLIE then adverted to the manner in which the Hon. Gentleman, who brought forward this question, and his friends, had, on the present and former occasions, dwelt upon the severity of the punishments that are usually inflicted on our Negroes in the West India Islands—and admitted, that instances of cruelty, nay even of inhumanity, might be produced; but I deny most positively, continued the Hon. Gentleman, that the principle or

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practice is general; and I wish to be permitted to ask such of the Members of this House as have had the honour of serving in his Majesty's navy and army, if it is possible, or practicable, to maintain that order and subordination that are absolutely necessary among bodies of men, without the fear of punishment? I say, Sir, that it is not possible; and as punishments generally fall on delinquents, of whom there are a certain number in every society, I do maintain, that, in every ship's crew and regiment, there is as great a proportion of people who come within that description, as in any Gang of Negroes in the West Indies, be they ever so indifferently disposed.

That being admitted, I will be glad to ask, *If ever there are punishments inflicted on our seamen and soldiers? Have we ever heard of seamen being flogged from ship to ship; or of soldiers dying in the very act of punishment, under the lash of the drummer, when tied up to the halberds, and exposed in as shameful and ignominious a manner as possibly*

*possibly can be conceived? Have we not also heard, even in this country of boasted liberty, of seamen being kidnapped and carried away, when returning from distant voyages, after an absence of many years, and that even without being allowed the comfort of seeing their wives and families?**

Mr. BAILLIE expressed a concern at the statement of those circumstances, and justified himself, by a reference to the very illiberal manner in which the Abolition Enthusiasts had brought forward every circumstance that could implicate the West Indies; and remarked, that objects of misery and compassion are much more frequent to be met with in Europe than in America. I declare, without hesitation, said the Hon. Gentleman, and upon the best grounds of personal knowledge and information, that there are more wretchedness and poverty in the parish of St. Giles's, in which I live, than there is *in the whole of*

* The arguments of the Abolitionists, if they tend to Emancipation also, go very far to unsettle subordination in the Army and Navy.

the extensive colonies that now are, and formerly were, under the dominion of Great Britain; taking them from Barbadoes to Jamaica, round by the Floridas, and from thence to the island of Newfoundland.

Mr. BAILLIE hoped the Committee would have the goodness to excuse him for dwelling so long upon this part of his argument; and requested their particular attention to the very unhandsome and illiberal manner in which the Hon. Gentleman, who took the lead in this business, and some of his friends, had treated the characters of many of the witnesses who were examined before the Committee of the House of Commons.

I am very far, continued he, from being disposed to make general reflections upon any body or set of men, in the manner that has been adopted by these Hon. Gentlemen; nor will I go into the particulars of the evidence, taking it for granted, that the unprejudiced part of this House will consider the individuals that have been brought forward on the part of
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the African merchants, to be full as respectable, *as unbiassed*, and *as independent in their characters and situations*, as those who have appeared on the other side. As to what regards that part of the evidence which applies to the West Indies, I am of a very different opinion indeed ; I admit, Sir, that there were produced by our opponents, some persons, to whose testimony a *certain portion of credit ought to be given*——but they were few in number, and therefore I will venture to say, that their general body of witnesses was composed of ill-informed, ignorant, and low men ; many of them picked up in the streets of Liverpool and Bristol, where they were starving for want of bread, having neither ability nor reputation to get into any employment ; and hired by the emissaries and agents of the Society in the Old Jewry, for the very purpose of giving such testimony as would mislead the minds of the public, who had already been wrought up to an extraordinary state of belief, by the publica-

publication of the most incredible chain of incidents that ever appeared in print.

Have we never heard, Sir, of the names of RODNEY, BARRINGTON, HOTHAM, MACARTNEY, VAUGHAN, or CAMPBELL, and the many other great and respectable characters, who were examined before the Committee of the House of Commons, and gave ample testimony to the comfortable situation of the Negroes in the West Indies ?

Is the evidence of those Gentlemen (to make use of the phrase of an Honourable Member of this House) *to be set at nought* ? Or rather, are we not to give full credit and belief to the words of men, to whom their country, in a great measure, owes the importance and weight she at present possesses among the nations of Europe ?

For my part, Sir, I was filled with indignation at the very idea of drawing the opinions of such illustrious characters into comparison with the evidence of those on the opposite side, upon the discussion of the subject last year ; and I lamented exceedingly,

ceedingly, that I was not then in a situation to give my sentiments upon it.

Mr. BAILLIE then proceeded to state the value and importance of the West Indian and African Trades to Great Britain—

It is not my intention, said he, to take up the time of the Committee, with an account of the revenue arising to government from the importation of the product of our West India islands; as probably I may be told by some of the politicians of the present day, that a similar importation from Ostend or Havre, would in that respect be attended with the same advantages to Great Britain. I will therefore, Sir, confine myself, to our Trade and Navigation to the colonies and to Africa; and will be glad to ask such Gentlemen as are pleased to pay proper attention to the subject, If the exportation to, and the importation from, the British West India islands and Africa, to the amount in the whole of *ten million sterling annually*, the giving employment to *300,000 tons of shipping*, and about *25,000 seamen*, are not

not objects of the UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO GREAT BRITAIN? The Gentlemen who had acted so very hostile a part, to the interest of the colonies, may now, as on a former occasion, consider these objects greatly over-rated; but as I deal in MATTERS OF FACT, and *in facts only*, I will be bound to make what I advance appear well founded, and to the entire satisfaction of this House, when, and in whatever mode they are pleased to order me.

Having mentioned in a concise, but accurate manner, the value and importance of our West Indian and African trade, he pointed out some of the authorities, upon which our claims are founded; of the dependence of the colonies upon the African trade, and of the injustice and impolicy of the present question.

However much, said he, it may be the fashion of the present times, to prefer the opinions of retired and speculative philosophers to the wise colonial system that has been established by our forefathers, and by which this country and the colo-

nies have thriven ; yet he was convinced, that the present Parliament was too much awake to the true interests of Great Britain, not to pay proper attention to the encouragement and protection that have been given to the West India colonies, and to the African trade, since their first establishment.

As it would take up too much of the time of the House to go fully into the authorities, he meant to confine himself to a very few; being unaccustomed to speak in public, would beg the indulgence of the Committee to call in the aid of written information, and to request of the clerk to read occasionally such parts of the several Acts and Resolutions as apply most immediately to the subject of debate.

The acts and declarations of the British Legislature, most material to this question before the House, may be classed under these different heads, viz.

1st, Such as declare the said colonies, and the trade thereof, advantageous to Great Britain, and therefore entitled to her protection and encouragement.

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2dly,

2dly, Such as authorize, protect, and encourage, the trade to Africa, as advantageous in itself, and necessary to the welfare and existence of the said Sugar colonies.

3dly, Such as promote and secure loans of money to the Proprietors at the said colonies, either from British subjects, or from Foreigners.

The several Acts are as follow, viz.

In the *first* class,

15 Car. II. cap. 7. 22 and 23 Car. II. cap. 26. 7 & 8 W. III. cap. 22. 9 & 10 W. III. cap. 23. 3 and 4 Ann. 6 Ann. 6 Ann. cap. 30. 6 Geo. II. cap. 13. 12 Geo. II. cap. 30. 27 Geo. III. cap. 27.

In the *second* class,

1662 Cha. II. 1672 cap. 2. 9 & 10 Will. & Mary, cap. 26. 5 Geo. III. cap. 44. 23 Geo. III. cap. 65. 27 Geo. III. cap. 27.

In the *third* class,

5 Geo. II. cap. 7. 13 Geo. III. cap. 14. 14 Geo. III. cap. 79.

When these several Acts of Parliament were read, Mr. BAILLIE remarked, that if any dependence

dependence were to be placed upon the Acts of the British Legislature, the authorities he had quoted must operate upon the minds of the unprejudiced Members of the House, and of the community at large, in so forcible a manner, as to afford every reasonable hope for the most perfect security to our properties.

They appeared to him unanswerable, and even to preclude the necessity of using any farther argument upon the subject ; but, added Mr. BAILLIE, as we have experienced a want of candour on the part of our opponents, which could hardly have been suspected, I must once more trespass on the goodness of the Committee, by requesting their attention to the encouragement and protection that have been given to the West India Colonies, and to the African trade, from the reign of Ch. II. down to the present times, and especially during the reign of Queen Anne.

That reign, which may very well be called the Augustan Age of Great Britain, was distinguished by the appearance of

the most enlightened characters in all departments that ever any country produced ; many of them remarkable for their piety and learning, and whose writings will live for ages, after the wretched productions of the *miserable schismatics of the present day are buried in oblivion*. Yet, Sir, we do not find in the Parliamentary History of those days, nor in any other writings that we know of, the least tendency to such wild and destructive doctrines as the present. No, Mr. Chairman, they were reserved for this age of *novelty* and *innovation* ; and for the temper and disposition of a certain description of people, which are amply manifested by the publications of the most inflammatory and dangerous tendency with which our daily papers are crowded, and disgraced.

I am perfectly satisfied, that the question before this Hon. House is only an introduction to greater evils.

The West Indies is the most vulnerable part of our dominions ; and being at a distance, and having few advocates in Parliament,

liament, is of course the most likely to become an easy object of prey to artful and designing men—however, Mr. Chairman, our brethren in those islands being the SONS OF BRITONS, AND THEIR FOREFATHERS HAVING CARRIED ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN ALL THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES THAT PERTAIN TO BRITISH SUBJECTS, YOU MAY REST PERFECTLY SATISFIED, THAT THEY WILL NOT TAMELY SUBMIT TO BE ROBBED OF EVERY THING THAT IS DEAR TO THEM. The Abolition of the African Slave Trade will be an absolute breach of the compact that ties the colonies to the Mother Country; and being founded on injustice, and contrary to the spirit and meaning of the laws of England, will meet with universal resistance.

I am perfectly well acquainted with the temper and disposition of the inhabitants of our West India Islands; they possess abilities, having in general received the best education this country affords, and having a lively and just sense of their own rights and privileges.

I con-

I consider it my duty, as a most hearty wellwisher to the true interests of this country and its colonies, to inform this House, that it is not in the power of Great Britain to prevent the introduction of Negroes into the British West India Islands.

A serious attention to the several Acts I have mentioned, and to the many other authorities with which our books are filled, must fully convince every unprejudiced member of this House, and the community at large, that the laws in existence have given as perfect security to the lives and fortunes of his Majesty's subjects in the West India Islands, as they do to his subjects in Great Britain ; and that their property cannot be meddled with or diminished, in any shape whatever, *without full and ample compensation.*

If Great Britain is in a situation to purchase the fee-simple of the property in all our Islands ; I, for one, have no objection to the making of a bargain ; but how is the value to be estimated ? Agreeably to the principles of the laws of England
and

and of the Colonies, by a jury of the vicinage ; for I can assure the honourable mover of this question, that we are not at all in a disposition to have that material point ascertained by the discretionary opinions of *his friends in the Old Jewry*. Mr. BAILLIE then asked, whether the House was not in possession of full and satisfactory information of every circumstance with regard to the West India Colonies ? Do not the Report of the Committee of Privy Council, and that immense body of evidence that was taken before a Committee of the House, and which now lie on the table, declare most positively, that *our present stock of Negroes cannot be kept up without an importation from Africa ; and that if the African trade is abolished, there is an end of every species of improvement in all our islands ?*

How, then, are the proprietors of lands in the ceded islands, which were purchased of Government under specific conditions of settlement, to be indemnified ?

fied? And what is to become of an honourable friend of mine, now a Member of this House, and sitting near me, who, with another gentleman and myself, purchased the lands that were granted by the Crown to General Monckton in the island of St. Vincent, in the year 1773 or 1774, in consequence of the address of the House of Commons of that day to his Majesty, and as a reward for that General's military services?

The American war, which immediately succeeded our purchase, prevented our making any progress in the sale of these lands until the year 1784. Our sales then commenced, and went on very briskly until the year 1788, when it was first known that a plan was in agitation for abolishing the African Slave trade. Since that period we have done little or nothing, and we have now 1500 acres of the land on hand, which will be of no value whatever, if the present question should be decided in the affirmative.

Mr. BAILLIE then demanded, whether any Gentleman, either in or out of Parliament, could pretend to say, that the Colonists have not a just and equitable claim upon the Government of this country for full and ample compensation ? But, waving for a moment the *unfashionable doctrine of colonial rights*, how, he desired to know, could compensation be made to the many thousand manufacturers, who at present find employment in providing the numberless articles that are daily wanted for the use and consumption of the West India Islands, and who must sooner or later experience the distress that will result from the present phrenzy, if the colonies should be suffered to go to ruin ?

Is there a shoe, is there a stocking, is there a hat, or is there a yard of cloth of any kind, used by the inhabitants of our islands, that is not manufactured in Great Britain ? Nay, the very implements of husbandry, the provisions and luxuries that are necessary for the consumption of our tables, go from this country, and

that at a considerable expence of fresh commissions and insurance, every shilling of which centers in Great Britain.

IS NOT THE WHOLE SURPLUS REVENUES OF OUR ESTATES SPENT HERE, AND ARE NOT OUR CHILDREN EDUCATED IN THIS COUNTRY, AND INSTRUCTED IN THOSE PRINCIPLES OF AFFECTION AND LOYALTY, THAT HAVE EVER MADE THEM CONSIDER GREAT BRITAIN AS THEIR MOTHER COUNTRY? And let me be permitted to ask the most inveterate of our foes, if we ever have by any act of sedition or rebellion, forfeited in the smallest degree the countenance and protection, which as sons of Britain, and subjects of the same good and gracious Sovereign, we are most unquestionably entitled to? I maintain, that we have not, and therefore AS A COLONIST, AND IN THE NAME OF THE BRITISH WEST INDIA COLONIES, I DEMAND OF THE PARLIAMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, THAT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION WHICH, UPON THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD POLICY AND FAITH, THEY ARE IN DUTY BOUND TO AFFORD US, IN COM-

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MON WITH THE REST OF HIS MAJESTY'S
LOYAL SUBJECTS.

Mr. BAILLIE concluded by observing, that there was still one consideration more attending the question, of full as much importance as any he had mentioned, and that was, the fatal effects a diminution of our trade would have upon the navigation of Great Britain. He then demanded, whether it did not appear, by the evidence on the table, that the West India trade is considered a most excellent nursery for seamen; and in all the wars we have of late been engaged in, had been found the most active and useful body of men in his Majesty's navy?

For his own part, considering the navy as our best and most natural defence, he was one of those who thought that seamen ought to be made by all possible means; and, upon that principle, contended, that the trade to Africa should meet with every encouragement this country can give it. Indeed, added Mr. BAILLIE, so great an enthusiast am I for the increase of our navigation and seamen, that

while I have the honour of being a Member of this House, I never will give my consent to any measure that can possibly tend to lessen the number of our seamen *one man*. This I hold to be sound constitutional doctrine; and those who are of a different opinion, I will ever consider as IGNORANT OF THE TRUE INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND ENEMIES TO ITS WELFARE AND PROSPERITY.

Mr. VAUGHAN rose to vindicate the Planters. He lamented, that in the discussion of the question their conduct had been involved with that of the Traders; particularly as this view of the business had been used to stop the supplies of Negroes from Africa. In this stage, he apprehended, it was necessary to remove any prejudices which might arise respecting his testimony, as he was connected with the West Indies by birth, profession, and

and private fortune. He had not resorted to merchandize from the motives of necessity, but from those of independence, a NOBLE PERSONAGE having offered to provide for him in a very ample manner. At an early period of life he had resisted this temptation, and resolved to improve his own fortune, free from the operations of political parties. With regard to his sentiments of freedom, he believed every person would be convinced, that he had certainly imbibed principles of the most laudable nature, when he mentioned, that he had been the pupil of Dr. PRIESTLY, and had also studied with Mrs. BARBAULD's father. These were ample testimonies of the rectitude of his conduct, and he flattered himself that every Gentleman would thence be fully persuaded of his sincerity.

To gratify his curiosity, and to establish in his mind the complete truth, he had visited Jamaica. There he learnt, first, that the Negroes were not in a state to embrace perfect liberty ; secondly, that
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their civilization would be attended with wants unavoidable in similar circumstances; and that those who had embarked their fortunes in the colonies, might be inevitably ruined.

What had entailed upon the Planters some degree of opprobrium, was the correction of the species of Negroes called *Maroons*. They constantly refused to work, and threw the labour upon their wives, who were ruled by their husbands in the most despotic manner.

As he had undertaken a voyage to Jamaica to form a true judgement of the subject, by the evidence of his own eyes, he delivered his opinions free and unbiassed. He scorned to sacrifice the feelings of his heart to his interest: whatever allegations he might advance were purely the effects of conviction.

The EMANCIPATION of the NEGROES, to which this motion, he apprehended, would operate, appeared to him impolitic and impracticable. Civilization was progressive, and should precede the grant of freedom

freedom. It ought, at the same time, to be recollected, that in a civilized state the *mind* had wants; but, in slavery, the *body* alone suffered. Between the Tropics, white people could not be employed, the excessive heat of the climate rendering their services useless. The Planters were anxious for the completion of their work; they required Workmen, not Slaves. Instead of the Abolition of slavery, he most earnestly recommended schools for teaching the Christian Religion, by which the purposes of society would be better answered than the indulgence of wild theories, which had already been too inimical to the community at large. The whites, he soon saw, could not replace the Negroes in the field; a fact which the SIERRA LEONE COMPANY had lately themselves acknowledged, in opposition to Mr. RAMSAY. The situation, also, of the Negroes was better than he could have supposed; for cloaths and fuel they could have little want on account of the climate—they had a house and land gratis

gratis—they suffered no imprisonment for debt—no fear of not being able to support a family to deter them from marrying—their orphans and widows were sure to be taken care of—as likewise themselves, when old or meeting with accidents—they had medicines, surgery, midwifery, and attendance, gratis—they had their private property, which no master ever took from them. They were perfectly resigned, at the time he was abroad, to their situation, and looked for nothing beyond it. Negroes formed the labouring poor of the islands; and with respect to necessities, they appeared as happy as any other poor, and had as many amusements of their own and as much cheerfulness. It was cruel to say, as Mr. RAMSAY had done, that they had only four or five hours to themselves in the four and twenty, for this was not enough for sleep, much less for their night rambles. To prove these assertions, he affirmed, that in all his excursions through the island, he had not seen any beggars; every person

person was employed, and the Negroes had the disposal of the money which they could acquire in their leisure hours.

As to Africa, there seemed no mode at that time of preventing her supplying fresh Slaves ; so that he did not conceive how an error in the importation could be corrected, unless by a change in the spirit of the times, not having possession of an Alexander's sword to cut the Gordian Knot by force, in the face of Acts of Parliament, and without providing indemnity to the concerned.

Mr. Vaughan now proceeded to notice a number of prejudices respecting the Colonies :—first, that it was nothing but cruelty which occasioned the inequality of deaths and burials. But was it cruelty that occasioned this inequality in the great city of London ? Or in particular classes of people in all places, such as domestic servants, soldiers, &c. ? It was owing to celibacy, or disease, according to the case. Among the Negroes, it was owing to the

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formerly prevalent plan of having more males than females imported, and to the dissoluteness of those people, as well as to their diseases ; particularly among the children whose frequent deaths at a particular date from their birth and their doing well in general, if they survived that date. Thence the calamities mentioned could not be owing to cruelty.

He remarked that the two opinions seemed contradictory, that the Negroes were wasting from cruelty, and yet that they increased so as to make farther importations superfluous. He then paid a high compliment to Mr. Pitt, and noticed one of his objections on the subject of Colony population, too minute to repeat here.

He spoke also of a difficulty about population, even in these islands, which nearly kept up their numbers by procreation ; which was, that the failure might be owing to the increase on one estate compensating for losses upon another.

Different

Different estates, from different causes, were more healthy than others ; but it should be considered, that these estates would not interchange their numbers. Whereas when labourers were freemen, they circulated from one employer to another, and appeared wherever they were wanted.

In small estates, or small islands, any calamity made a deep and permanent impression on the population ; such as famine, plague, small pox, or war. This disaster was exemplified in Indian tribes ; in many cases in history, some of which cases had lately operated in the West Indies.

Mr. Vaughan contended, that all chastisement with respect to Negroes was not cruelty ; the owners of Slaves generally withdrew them from all public justice, so that criminals who would be publicly executed elsewhere, were often, from a mistaken humanity, kept alive by their masters, and liable to be punished repeatedly from repeating their faults.

Distributive justice occasioned many punishments, as every Slave was to be protected against every other Slave.

The care of the Negroes themselves, as to their health, provisions, cloathing, family, and the like, occasioned other punishments.

All circumstances should be distinguished from punishments, to enforce labour, or those arising from cruelty.

So far were the Negroes from being neglected, that infinite anxiety occurred with many owners about their Slaves, whom they often visited in person when sick ; and to corroborate these facts, the evidence before the House had stated that 9l. sterling had been given for attending a difficult case in midwifery.

Many diseases were new to Europeans in the islands, and required time to admit of a plan to perfect the cure.

Thus a diminution of the number of Negroes, in the Colonies, might happen without cruelty.

Circum-

Circumstances of a very different kind, respecting the Colonies, required some notice to prevent misconstruction. The objections which some persons had to consuming sugar, when it came from the West Indies, were liable, for example, to produce mischief. To obviate these allegations, he affirmed, that indigo was a plant which had no offals, and was good for neither man nor beast; so sugar was an article of cultivation, known to be favourable to both; and as the planters would not consent to keep their Negroes idle, it was commendable to allow the Negroes to be employed in the manner most beneficial to the public.

Another objection was, that the crops of the Sugar Colonies were subject to many casualties, which made them precarious objects of attention. It should, however, be remembered, that gentlemen had experienced the interposition of farmers between themselves and the fluctuations of their crops; but in the islands, the planters
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kept in general immediate possession of their own estates, and therefore felt every variation of the crops.

A third objection was, that the Colonists were monopolists, sold sugar dear, and obtained great profits. The Colony System, which was the occasion of a *mutual* monopoly, had given advantages to some planters, but others had purchased from the first comers so as to have bare profits.

On the whole, he had seen little, if any of the cruelty or outrage talked of ; none at all on the estate where he resided ; and the whip, the stocks, and confinement alone, were in use in other places. Thumb-screws and other instruments of torture having been entirely abolished.

He confessed that there was room for much amendment ; he would mention what occurred to him on this head, because, if proper, his hints might receive the sanction of Government. In the mean time, those persons who complain-
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ed of the Colonists, might do much service by resorting to the islands, and by teaching the planters how to take care of their estates and preserve their Negroes, for which purpose many were ready to sell their properties to them at advantageous bargains. Thus the philanthropy of the age might be indulged, and the present proprietors might receive some compensation for their property.

Missionaries, some of the *itinerant Clergy* for example, present at the debate, might be of the utmost utility in the islands. The *Catholics* in the ceded islands, and the *Moravians* at Antigua, had been of the greatest benefit; and many planters, and several island legislators, had recommended the expedient. Where RELIGION was once instilled, there would be less punishment—more work done—and better done—more marriages—more issue—and more attachment to their Masters and to the Government.

Another article of much importance was to institute MEDICAL SOCIETIES.—*Medical men* had often much enthusiasm, more than in most other professions, and certainly more than in the *church*, the *law*, or the *army*. Their communications would contribute much to the public benefit. They had many new diseases to encounter where they had no ancient practice, nor the knowledge derived from neighbouring countries to assist them. The diseases of Negro Infants were particularly worthy of their attention, as he himself knew no remedy for the great disease by which they were attacked.

TASK WORK was another improvement; there were inconveniencies in it easily to be avoided, such as having too much severity exercised upon the Negroes at one time, and permitting them too much relaxation at another.

PREMIUMS had been given to MOTHERS for the number of children reared, but
fathers

fathers had hitherto been forgotten. To these premiums might be added *honorary distinctions* and solid advantages, which would cost nothing to the owners.

NEGRO EVIDENCE should be allowed to be given in COURTS of LAW, with an option to the court or jury to accept it according to the case.

CRUEL MASTERS might be punished in various ways: their Negroes should be taken from them and put into trust. Every instrument of punishment should be abolished, excepting the whip, to which might be added confinement. The limitation are the number of lashes, which, should it prove insufficient, it should be ordered that the punishment should not be repeated till after due intervals.

No danger could occur in making EXAMPLES of WHITE PERSONS for oppression of their Slaves. Such a salutary measure should be immediately adopted; the public expect it. The character of the Colonists, whose conduct is exemplary,

are prejudiced by being confounded with those of the most base of mankind. It is detestable to think how far the principle of sheltering the whites may proceed; in fact, they ought to extend no farther than deemed necessary to secure the Slave on the one hand, and his protection on the other. Mr. Locke, indeed, in his Constitution of Carolina, says, that the authority and power of the master were absolute; but he recommended that the Slave should be permitted the choice of his religion, and the liberty of attending it.

If the Abolition of the Slave Trade were to pass, he trusted their attention would be turned to INDEMNIFICATION. Without going farther into the subject at present, it must be recollected, that many thousand acres had been sold in the ceded islands for 6 or 700,000*l.* and that many hundred thousand acres had paid quit-rents in Jamaica, though not fully cultivated.

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The *first* indemnity wanted, was that of LABOURERS, which was an indemnity in kind.

If FREE LABOURERS could be found in Africa, the planters would be glad of them, as they only wanted labour, whether paid for daily or otherwise : they did *not* want Slaves to tyrannize over them. Perhaps it was, after all, from African labourers, slaves, or freemen, that the whole parts of America now unsettled would at last be peopled. Mr. Vaughan concluded by asking, whether Mr. Wilberforce did not design to suffer his question to be divided? namely, to have it proposed generally *first* for the abolition without any limitation, and then leave room for the insertion of a limited time, if voted for. To which Mr. Wilberforce assented.

Mr. Vaughan, in a speech of considerable length, which was listened to with the greatest attention by all sides, maintained, notwithstanding the reports industriously circulated concerning the wretched state

of the Slaves, that they were not impatient of bondage ; that he had frequently witnessed them at their diversions, as lively and jocund as Frenchmen ; that the tenderness of the Planters had been proved by thousands of instances recorded in the papers on the table ; that the Negroes of the West Indies were much more comfortably provided for, than the inferior classes of people in Great Britain ; and that should Parliament adopt the system of an *immediate* Abolition, our valuable interest in the colonies would be totally destroyed, and the National Revenue greatly diminished.

Colonel TARLETON declared, that notwithstanding all the violence with which this Motion was supported last year ; and notwithstanding the indefatigable exertions
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of the Junto, since that period, which were fully evinced by the pile of Petitions that had been placed upon the table; he should not shrink from the Question, but proceed to argue against a speculation which, if carried into effect, must eventually prove destructive to the interests of this country; being firmly convinced *that HUMANITY, to become laudable, should be tempered with justice.*

The Colonel then proceeded to observe, that he did not consider it necessary, after the thorough investigation which this question had undergone, and the adjudication it received from a respectable majority last year, again to enter into all the minutiae, which are necessarily implicated in so important a debate, and which have been already so amply discussed; but should content himself with touching upon the different prominent features, and never lose sight of that philanthropy which the Abolitionists fallaciously esteem to be their vantage ground on this occasion.

sion. As one of the Representatives of a great and flourishing commercial town, as a friend to the rights and properties of many thousand of Manufacturers, Planters, and Merchants, and an advocate likewise for humanity, good policy, and justice, Colonel Tarleton said, he would proceed briefly and clearly to state those arguments which occurred to him against the Abolition of the African trade.

I shall not now, observed the Colonel, notice the origin of the trade—the sanction it has received from Parliament; the state of ignorance in which the natives of Africa are involved; the horrid despotism which pervades it, in consequence of that barbarism; or compare the mild government of the West Indies with the savage tyranny of the Kings and Princes of Africa; but endeavour to point out the **IMPOLICY** and **IMPOSSIBILITY** of **ABOLISHING** the **AFRICAN TRADE**.

The different States of Europe are, and have been for ages past, solicitous to
increase

increase their Commerce, their Colonies, and their Slave Trade; and by experience have found, that the prosperity of all depended upon the success of each.

I need not enumerate the Portuguese, the Danes, the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the French, who were reported in this House to have been on the start to outrace us in the suppression of the Slave Trade, but who, by authorities which I have now in my hand, are actually foremost for its continuance and extension. It is apparent, therefore, as I had the honour, on a former occasion, to remark to this House, that if we were disposed to sacrifice our African Trade, other nations would not enter into so ruinous a plan. The French, for instance, depend greatly on their West India Trade as a source both of revenue and navigation; (I have it not now in contemplation to expatiate on the situation of St. Domingo; to that I shall presently advert) will they suffer a trade, upon
which

which their whole commerce turns, to languish? No; they would thank us for our mistaken ideas of humanity, and they would profit by them; the disadvantage would be ours; the advantage would be theirs; and the condition of the African would be exactly the same, whether he crossed the Atlantic in an English or any other European bottom; and should we persist in so wild a project as Abolition, the Continent will soon be supplied with English houses, English Ships, and English capitals.

Having stated the present situation of Europe, with regard to the African Trade, he thought it did not require much penetration or judgement to detect and expose the fallacious doctrine of those Sectaries, who would attempt to abolish, what other Nations encourage and protect. A portion of common sense, which in general, contributes more to the public good, than sophistry or enthusiasm, and which frequently disperses the mists, which *elo-*

quence, prejudice, and fanaticism, endeavour to raise, to cover their own purposes, enables the majority of this House, and of this country to declare, that an ABOLITION ON THE PART OF ENGLAND ALONE, WILL NOT ABOLISH THE TRADE IN GENERAL.

The Colonel then very judiciously remarked, that unless a place of Congress should be appointed, and unless all the nations of Europe accede to such a proposition, and enter fully into the project of abolition, we only create difficulties and embarrassments for our merchants and manufacturers, without effecting any other purpose. Nay, perhaps our present *wild, fanatical* manner of conducting this speculation, MAY ALIENATE THE AFFECTIONS OF OUR COLONISTS, WHO, THROUGH A DELUGE OF BLOOD, MAY WORK OUT FOR THEMSELVES ANOTHER INDEPENDENCE, OR MAY THROW THEMSELVES INTO THE ARMS OF THOSE CONFEDERATED STATES, WHOSE CONSTITU-

K

TION

TION TELLS US, THAT THEY HAVE A SACRED REGARD FOR PUBLIC FAITH, AND PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Though I sincerely wish, for the honour of human nature, that an eternal veil could be drawn over the recent horrible transactions in St. Domingo, I cannot help noticing some circumstances, because they seem to originate in the same principles and practices which some people in this country have lately adopted, with regard to the West-India Islands. I shall not attempt to describe the barbarities and horrors of those scenes which have been displayed at St. Domingo—a bare recital of which would make an impression upon the hardest heart, and most inaccessible understanding, without the assistance of pathetic eloquence, or laboured ingenuity. I shall therefore turn the attention of the Committee from a contemplation of *rapes, of massacres, of conflagrations, of impaled infants, and acts of parricide,* and endeavour to point out concisely,

cifely, the impolicy, as well as danger of our now purfuing the object of abolition.

Partial extracts of the debates of this Houfe, and the garbled ftatements of evidence, which have been fo induftrioufly circulated, both in this country and through all the Colonies, have created alarm and diftruff throughout every ifland in the Weft Indies. All the letters from that quarter of the GLOBE, fpeak moft forcibly of the mifchiefs and dangers that may arife, and which actually threaten the white inhabitants. I have, within this laft week, received a letter from a respectable officer at Antigua, defcribing the fickly fituation of the King's troops, owing to the frequent detachments required from them, in order to awe, or fuppreff infurrections amongft the Negroes throughout the different iflands. Government has been made acquainted with thefe circumftances, and the perils which confequently impended; and to relieve the minds of the colonifts, and to counter-

act the absurd vote of the Minister, that very Minister has been compelled to send a reinforcement of infantry, and a regiment of light dragoons ; the vote of this night may require additional troops, and if this chimerical project is to be revived every year, the army of England may be fully employed in the West Indies.

On the subject of the petitions which have been lately presented, I must beg leave to observe, that though I entertain the highest respect and veneration for the petitions of the people of England, I cannot yield my admiration on the present occasion, because I think that their sentiments have not been fairly collected. The form and language of the petitions bear too strong a resemblance to each other. they appear to be *the manufacture of the Sectaries of the Old Jewry* ; and the signatures do not stamp them, in my mind, with any additional credit or authority. Unexpected and unsolicited letters have lately poured in upon me, from the most respectable individuals,

dividuals, in all parts of England, describing the various artful modes adopted, for obtaining and creating signatures ; and to an Honourable Member now in my eye, I am indebted for an extensive correspondence, even in the remotest parts of Scotland.

In some villages and towns, mendicant physicians, and itinerant clergymen, have exercised almost unexampled zeal and industry, and displayed the ingenuity of SCAPIN to *extort names* from the *sick*, the *indigent*, and the *traveller* : in others, the grammar schools have received ceremonious visits from the indefatigable emissaries of the abolitionists ; and the boys have been indulged with the gladsome tidings of a holiday, provided they would sign their own, and the names in the neighbourhood ; and, when on examination, the inhabitants could not furnish signatures, sufficiently numerous, they have been desired to employ their imagination, to give to "*airy nothing, a local habitation and a name !*"

Colonel

Colonel TARLETON then adverted to the letters in his possession, to support what he had just advanced, and amongst them read the following extracts :

“ *Warrington, March, 1792.*

“ SIR,

“ Having with pleasure frequently observed, that you are the Champion for the Trade of Liverpool, I beg leave to communicate to you a piece of intelligence I lately pick'd up, on my return from a journey to Manchester, relative to the mode pursued by the Partizans for the abolition of the African trade, in order to procure as many names as they can to their petitions. I fell in company with a very respectable tradesman of Warrington, who told me he had a son just returned from school at Bolton ; where a petition to Parliament for the abolition had been industriously handed about, to obtain the signatures of all ranks of people, from the highest to the lowest ; and that, in order to procure all the names, they possibly could, real or imaginary,

ginary, they waited on the school-boys and not only got them to sign their own names, but also as many more names of their neighbours as they could recollect ; some of the arch boys (of less retentive memories) perceiving that those boys who could recollect the most names met with the greatest applause, in order to receive a proportionable share of praise, first signed their own names with others they did recollect ; after that they invented new names, and put them down also.—Any comments I could make on such petitions being considered as the sense of the people of Bolton, &c. to you would be superfluous—I only give you the fact, which I consider as my duty, as a well-wisher to the Merchants and Trade of Liverpool, to inform you of : therefore hope you will pardon the liberty I now take. I am,

With the greatest respect, SIR,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

—————.”

Colonel

Colonel TARLETON has the original letters in his possession, but does not feel authorized to publish the names of the writers.

“ Chester, March 30, 1792.

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ Knowing there was a petition carried on here for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, signed by a number of names, a great number of which, I thought, was very improper should be sent to that Honourable House of which you are a member, as it was chiefly children belonging to the different schools in this city ; amongst the rest, it was brought to the school of which I am a scholar, and was signed (by desire of my master) by every boy in the school that could write his name, myself excepted.

Yours respectfully,

—————.”

Relative to the signatures of the boys, the Colonel referred to the following passage in a letter from Sheffield, “ You
“ have

“ have time to establish the truth of it
 “ by enquiry, before the matter is dis-
 “ cussed, or by a line addressed to

“ The Rev. CHARLES CHADWICK,
 “ master of the grammar-school.

“ Rev. MATTHEW PRESTON, Eng-
 “ lish grammar-school.

“ JOHN EADON, master of the free
 “ writing-school.

“ Or most of the other writing school
 “ masters in this place.”

The Colonel observed, that he would not tire the patience of his hearers by reading letters in his possession written by respectable individuals resident at the following places :

Portsmouth	Culro's
Ipswich	Manchester
St. Andrews	Edinburgh
Carlisle	Hull
Dorchester	Chester
Swansea	&c. &c. &c.

The Magistrates of the places whence these extraordinary petitions have originated, have seldom been approached.

The Town-halls have still more rarely had these petitions displayed in them; in order to await the deliberation, the decision, or the signatures of the grave, respectable, and informed part of the community. No, Sir; parts of the flimsy hearsay evidence, which for a length of time oppressed and disgraced the table of this House, were mutilated, distorted, and reduced to the size of pamphlets, in order to promote their circulation, throughout all the ale-houses and Excise-offices in this kingdom, where the unwary and uninformed were tricked out of their humanity, by inflammatory extracts; and from such sources most of the petitions, which I had almost said disgraced the signers and the receivers, have been produced!

Great God! (exclaimed Col. TARLETON), is this a decent, honourable, or decorous manner of ascertaining, or shewing to the world the sentiments of the people of this country? No, Sir; it is EQUALLY AN INSULT AND A MOCKERY

KERY UPON THE PEOPLE AND PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND.

Colonel TARLETON then adverted to the difference of the evidence brought before the Privy Council, and the Select Committee of the House, by both parties, previous to the discussion of last year.

I need not, said he, stigmatize the Abolitionists, by mentioning the names of the generality of their evidences: nor need I say any thing more in eulogy of the principal evidences brought forwards by the Merchants and Planters, than merely repeat the names of Lord SHULDHAM, Admiral BARRINGTON, Admiral ARBUTHNOT, Admiral EDWARDS, Admiral HOTHAM, Commodore GARDNER, Lord MACARTNEY, Lord RODNEY, Sir RALPH PAYNE, Sir J. DALLING, Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, Mr. BAILLIE, Mr. HUBERT, and a long list of other respectable characters.

If I was to analyse the bulk of the

evidence, I should exhaust the patience of the Committee, in contrasting the *ignorance*, the *malice*, and *fanaticism* of some, with the veracity, the ingenuoufness, and the candour of others. In short, I should exhibit, if I gave a true picture, a variegated view of the fair and foul principles which dignify and debase the human mind.

Colonel TARLETON proceeded to reply to that part of Mr. WILBERFORCE's speech which more immediately affected the Merchants of Liverpool and Bristol, and observed, that no small degree of satisfaction resulted to his mind from the opportunity the Honourable Gentleman had afforded him of justifying a respectable body of his Constituents. He has been pleased to enlarge upon the losses sustained on the passage from Africa to the West Indies. Notwithstanding his calculations, his fabrications, or his comments, I can pledge myself to this House, and this country, in asserting and maintaining, that the
average

average loss *per cent.* does not exceed four and a half, since the regulations were imposed on the slave ships. And if we advert to the voyages of the King's troops, or the transportation to Botany Bay, the comparison is highly favourable to the African trade*.

Another

* With all due deference to Mr. Wilberforce's *supernatural acquirements*, this is a part of the subject which Colonel Tarleton must be supposed to be *nearly* as well instructed in as himself. But if proof were wanting to support the Colonel's assertion, let the papers laid on the table of the House of Commons the other day, relative to the transportation of the convicts to Botany Bay, be referred to, and then let the impartial world form a just opinion of the *humanity* of Mr. Wilberforce and his fellow-labourers.

The following extract, among many other that may be selected, will more than bear the Colonel out, and serve also to verify the opinion of a *real Philanthropist* (J. J. Rousseau), "*that there were*
 " *men who professed an extraordinary regard for the*
 " *interests of mankind, merely to serve as an excuse for*
 " *their shewing none to their own country.*"

Governor Philip, in his letter to Lord Grenville, dated 13th July 1790, says, "The enclosed return
 " will shew the state of the convicts landed from

" those

Another assertion of the Hon. Gentleman's I beg leave likewise to repel. He still chooses to enlarge the mortality amongst the seamen, and from thence draws an inference prejudicial to the town of Liverpool, and city of Bristol.—For the former of those ports (*and we may fairly conclude that the same trade is conducted in the same manner at the latter*), I must again repeat what I had the honour to deliver to the House last year, as there is no event has since occurred which

“ those ships, and the number that died on the
 “ passage. I will not dwell on the scene of misery
 “ which the hospitals and sick tents exhibited,
 “ when those people were landed; but it would
 “ be a want of duty not to say, that it was occa-
 “ sioned by the contractors having CROWDED too
 “ MANY ON BOARD *those ships, and from their being*
 “ *too much confined during the passage.*”—and, in
 another part of his letter, he says, “ many of
 “ those now received are *so emaciated from what*
 “ *they have suffered in the voyage, that they never*
 “ *will be capable of any labour.*” Hear this, ye
 mendicant reformers, and cease your libels against
 the African Traders!—If charity be the principle
 that actuates you, this letter furnishes but too
 melancholy a proof that you may exercise it at
 home.

gives

gives me reason to doubt its veracity :—

“ The Liverpool African trade is, in
 “ proportion to the number of hands it
 “ employs, the most productive nursery
 “ for seamen that belongs to the com-
 “ merce of this country. For admit-
 “ ting for a moment the exaggerated
 “ calculations which have gone abroad,
 “ of the mortality of the seamen em-
 “ ployed in this trade ; admitting that
 “ 642, out of 3170 persons, die in
 “ the voyage of one year ; admitting
 “ further, that half this mortality falls
 “ upon that half of the crew which is
 “ composed of seamen and officers,
 “ and consequently that 321 seamen
 “ perish in the course of one year’s
 “ voyage, yet as 1585 landsmen from
 “ the single port of Liverpool alone, in
 “ spite of that fabricated mortality,
 “ contributes annually, by means of
 “ this trade, an augmentation of 943
 “ persons to the navy of Great Bri-
 “ tain.”

I shall not trespass on the patience
 of the Committee, farther than mak-
 ing

ing one more observation on the Honourable Gentleman's speech, in which there is so little novelty. He was pleased to say that white people, and the sailors in particular, could work in the West Indies.—In answer to that assertion, I shall refer to what I deem good authority—the testimony of many respectable officers. It would be tiresome to enumerate the names of all the officers who have served in that part of the world, for they generally, I believe, without a single exception, maintain the truth of what I advance.—If he does not like naval or military authorities, I will indulge the Honourable Gentleman with other proofs of my assertion. It has been found by experience that the natives of Europe could not endure any labour under the intemperate heats of the West Indies.—Frequent attempts have been made to cultivate estates with white labourers. In this experiment the French are said to have lost 12,000 whites in the year

1763*. The Assembly of Jamaica offered great encouragement in the year 1749, to induce white families to settle in that Island, but of the few that went in ten years there were no remains.

With respect to the value of the African and West India trade to this country, examined either separately or connectively, no person has yet presumed to doubt the benefits derived from them. The manufacturers and merchants of this country find their interest *materially allied to the existence of the former*; and though the Honourable Gentleman who moved this question on a former day was pleased to style the African trade "*a lottery at Liverpool,*" it has been found by experience to be generally a profitable concern, and that

* The calculation made by M. de VOLNEY on this subject, far exceeds that of Colonel Tarleton, and on MONSIEUR de VOLNEY's information and accuracy, it is needless to make any panegyric.

Vide Volney on the War between the Russians and Turks, published by Debrett; a treatise in which an uncommon degree of intelligence is displayed.

the morals and fortunes of the individuals, who enter into it, are not so much debased and ruined as those of many of their neighbours, by their connections with the state lottery of this country.

He then took a very general view of the consequences which must necessarily result from the Honourable Gentleman's proposition if carried, and stated that by an abolition, several hundred ships, several thousand sailors, and some millions of industrious mechanics, would lose their employment, and be rendered worse than useless ; for a sudden chasm of this sort would undoubtedly be productive of the most dangerous consequences to society.

A yearly deficit of six millions, which is the lowest average, admitted by all sides of the House, and which would fall on the manufacturers, ship-builders, and a large body of the working people, would be sensibly felt in this country, though her industry and commerce flourished almost beyond calculation. And if we add to this defalcation of our commerce
and

and revenue, the loss of our Colonies, which are estimated at seventy millions, which, from the best authorities, are *totally dependent on the African trade*, what new discovery or contrivance is to remedy an evil which would palsy the very existence of the national prosperity*?

The opposition to the question now before the House (continued the Colonel) is so connected with the well-being and good government of this country, that if I was an enemy to the Constitution of England, which has been the work of ages, and which, though a good, all must acknowledge to be a very complicated machine, I would vote for the

* This is a question which the most *enlightened* of the Abolitionists will, it is humbly presumed, find it *rather* difficult to answer satisfactorily, and, with great deference, it is a question which should have been seriously weighed by a Minister who *professes* to lighten our burdens, and to pay off a national debt unexampled in the history of the world, before he suffered his better judgment to be swayed either by motives of private friendship, or imposed upon by the fallacious statements of wild enthusiasts.

abolition of the African trade. It certainly will be allowed, that a government, constituted like the one we now enjoy, is a new work in the annals of mankind. The great extent of commerce and credit, and the stupendous national debt, which overshadows the revenue of Great Britain, are circumstances to which we can find no parallel in history. Through the medium of science, and the extension of labour and manufactures, we are enabled to penetrate into every country, to become the merchants of every state, and the citizens of every clime.

To our commercial success, therefore, we may fairly attribute the great increase of power, wealth, and consequence; and our public and national debt has unfortunately, whether from error in Government, or not, I will not pretend to decide, kept pace with that power, that wealth, and that consequence. If, therefore, we attempt to circumscribe the means which have enabled us to arrive at the summit of commercial

mercial prosperity, shall we not endanger our Constitution by rashly drying up the sources which swelled the tide, and gave rapidity to the current of our commercial importance and national revenue ?

I need not enter into a minute description of the origin of the African trade, or the origin of the national debt. If either were to commence *de novo*, there would not be found in this House, or in this country, a more strenuous opposer of such speculations ; but *circumstanced as we now are*, it is the interest and duty of every good citizen, not to oppress the main spring of Government, but to facilitate, and regulate its movements with care and circumspection.

[The conclusion of Colonel Tarleton's speech was worthy of himself and of the cause which he supported with so much spirit and judgment.]

But if we violate the sanction of Parliament, and touch the vitals of our commerce, with a *rough and injudicious hand*, we endanger the existence of our present
Constitution.

Constitution. By the moderate and prudent interference of this House, the African trade, if mal-practices exist in it, may be meliorated ; by timely reformation we may correct the abuses in Government, encrease the general prosperity of this country, and restore and invigorate the powers of the Legislature. But if, with an *imprudent temerity*, we *daringly strike at the root of our commerce*, we undermine our present advantages, destroy our future expectations, and **THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE WILL BE GUILTY OF SUICIDE UPON THE LAWS, THE PROSPERITY, AND THE CONSTITUTION OF ENGLAND.**

After Mr. Fox had exerted all his powers in favour of Mr. WILBERFORCE's motion,

Mr. JENKINSON commenced a speech which, whether we consider the sound and salutary principles it contained, or the eloquent and impressivè style in which it was delivered, is equally entitled to our admiration, and of which

we

we can only hope to give the general out-lines, by expressing the regret he felt, whenever he differed from those with whom he was in the habit of acting ; but he should think he was acting inconsistently with that duty which he owed his CONSTITUENTS and his country, if, after having formed a *decided opinion* on so GREAT and IMPORTANT a QUESTION as that which was then before the House, any motives whatever should prevent him from delivering that opinion, and from supporting it with such arguments as might appear to him *decisive* on the subject.

In rising to oppose the propositions that had been made, he felt that he laboured under every possible difficulty. He rose, not only to oppose a measure, generally believed to be popular, but which was supported by a greater combination of abilities than was ever united on any one subject, on which a difference of opinion could reasonably exist. Feeling, as he did, his own inability to contend with the RIGHT HONOURABLE

NOURABLE GENTLEMAN who had spoken last, all that he could do was, to call the attention of the HOUSE, as briefly as possible, to what he conceived to be the real state of the question; and he hoped that the COMMITTEE would be influenced in their decision, rather by the weight of argument, than by any ingenuity or eloquence with which it might be supported.

He proceeded to observe, that the opinions of those who were adverse to the abolition, had in general been unfairly stated. It had been circulated that their opinion was founded on principles of *policy*, as opposed to principles of *humanity*—on no such ground was he disposed to resist the abolition. If it could be clearly made out that the interests of humanity were decidedly in favour of the proposition, Heaven forbid! Mr. Jenkinson exclaimed emphatically, that any motives of policy should prevent our adopting it. But if, on the contrary, it should appear, that the CAUSE of HUMANITY was, *in fact*,
against

against the Abolition, he trusted then that the very same principles which would in the one case have induced the Committee to adopt the proposition, would then induce them to unite with him in opposing it.—He desired, however, to be understood, when he said that the cause of *humanity* was against the Abolition. If the question was not, whether the trade was *originally founded in injustice and oppression*. He admitted it was.—The question was not, whether the trade was *abstractedly in itself an evil*. He admitted it to be so.—But whether, under all the circumstances of the case, any considerable advantage would arise to a number of our fellow creatures, from the abolition of the trade taking place in the manner in which it had been proposed?

The subject, he observed, from the manner in which it had been treated, naturally divided itself into three points of view.

1. The situation of the Negroes on the coast of Africa.

N

2. Their

2. Their situation in the Middle Passage.

3. Their situation in the West India islands ; and how far, in each of these respective situations, their condition was likely to be benefited by the measure which had been proposed ?

Disposed as he might be, not entirely to agree with the statement that had been made, of the situation of the Negroes in Africa, it was not his intention to rest any argument on that ground. He was ready to admit that their situation was miserable, that their miseries were in a great measure occasioned by the Slave Trade, and that if that trade was universally abolished, very great benefit would consequently accrue to the inhabitants of Africa. No person would, however, pretend to assert, that whatever may be the calamities suffered by the inhabitants of that continent, *those calamities arise from the trade, as carried on by Great Britain only.* Other countries must, of course, occasion as much

much of those evils as we do ; and if the abolition of the trade on our part should prove only the *transfer* of it into the hands of those countries, very little benefit could accrue to the Negroes from our humanity.

What, then, is the probability of our example being followed by those countries who have a considerable share in the trade ? Five years have now elapsed since the disposition of a considerable part of this country has manifested itself in favour of the abolition. Sufficient time, then, has been given, to enable us to judge whether other countries are likely to second our efforts.

Have the PORTUGUESE shewn any disposition to follow our example ? Far from it.

Have the DUTCH ? He was very much misinformed if there were not AGENTS from HOLLAND at this very time in this country, who were negotiating with persons concerned in

the trade, and who were desirous of giving all possible encouragement to them if we should abandon it.

Have the SPANIARDS ?

On the contrary, it will appear that they immediately took advantage of our disposition, and gave every possible encouragement to the trade, by offering a bounty on the importation of Slaves.

Have the FRENCH ?

They who have carried fanaticism, and their ideas of liberty, to an extent as yet unheard of—have they shewn any disposition to imitate our conduct in this particular ?

The measure was certainly proposed in the National Assembly, but was rejected ; nay, not only rejected, but the bounty on the importation of Slaves, as an encouragement to the trade, has been continued.

He said he should not have been surprised if some of these countries had thought it politic to pretend to have a similar disposition with ourselves, and
after

after having induced us to abolish the trade, they had availed themselves of our disposition to humanity. But when they have *not only shewn no disposition to abolish*, but, on the contrary, *every disposition to encourage* it, he had a right to infer, that the abolition of the trade, on our part, would be only the *transfer* of it into the hands of those countries.

On great political questions, where important interests are involved, it would in general have been thought sufficient to be able to prove, that *no benefit was likely to arise* to those to whom we were desirous of affording relief ; but if he could proceed further ; if he could prove, not only that *no advantage*, but that a *great disadvantage* would arise to the Negroes, from the measure that is proposed, no doubt could then remain on the mind of any person, who did not prefer *speculative* to *practical humanity*, respecting the propriety of rejecting it.

The mortality on board the English
ships

ships trading from Africa was, previous to the Regulating Bill, *four and an eighth per cent.* Since that, it had been reduced to a little more than *three per cent.*

The mortality on board *French ships* trading from the same quarter is near *ten per cent.*—so that there is *a mortality of nearly seven per cent. more on board French, than on board English ships.*

The mortality in *Dutch ships* is from *five to seven per cent.*

The mortality on board *Portuguese ships* is less than either on the *French* or *Dutch* ships, but *more than on English ships*, since the Regulating Bill.

Let us then, he observed, consider, what would be the consequence of the abolition of the trade on our part.

Do we regret the deaths, do we regret the cruelties that are said to have been committed?—*Those deaths, and those cruelties would be more than doubled if we were to abolish the trade.*

Suppose the case, as it really stands,
was

was to be submitted to the AFRICANS ; suppose we were to consult their inclinations on the subject, what do we believe would be their answer ; miserable as to them the trade might be ; numerous as the calamities they suffer from it ? “ If other countries are not disposed to unite with you in abolishing it, for our sakes do you continue it ; for whatever may be the evils we suffer from it, the trade carried on by other countries, when compared to the trade carried on by you, is as *evil* when compared to *good*.”

He was ready to admit that there was one answer, which would probably be made to this.

Great Britain trades not only for her own islands, but in some degree for those of other countries. No GOOD, but, on the contrary, EVIL, would be the consequence, to those Negroes which we carry into the FOREIGN WEST INDIA ISLANDS. But as the trade between AFRICA and our WEST INDIA

INDIA ISLANDS would then be stopped, and, as consequently a smaller number of Negroes would then be wanted, than those which are demanded at present, some degree of good would accrue to the people of Africa from the abolition of the trade on our part.

In answer to this argument, he observed, that as the WEST INDIA PLANTERS purchased Negroes at present, notwithstanding the greatness of their price, he had a right to infer, that they thought it for their interest to purchase them, and that consequently, even after the abolition of the trade on our part, they would not fail to purchase them. The point then to be considered was, what is the probability of their being able to smuggle?

The Committee may, in a great measure, judge of this from the evidence already before them.

By the evidence it appears that a great number of Slaves have been *clandestinely stolen*; from time to time, out
of

of our islands, and carried into the Foreign WEST INDIA ISLANDS. It appears that *several hundreds were stolen, within a very short period, from JAMAICA, and carried into CUBA.* These facts, he observed, might surprise the House, as it was clearly the interest of all the planters to prevent the smuggling, if possible. But if other countries were able to smuggle Slaves *out of the island, when it was the interest of every planter and overseer to prevent that practice*—it follows, that there would be very little difficulty in smuggling Slaves *into the islands, where it would be for the interest of every planter and overseer to promote it.*—The consequence then, he said, of the abolition of the trade on our part, would be only the *transferring it into the hands of other nations, who would carry it on at a much greater disadvantage to the AFRICANS, and who would acquire the advantage and profit to themselves of supplying our islands with Slaves.*

The attention of the COMMITTEE,

O

he

he proceeded to observe, was next called to the state of the NEGROES in the WEST INDIA ISLANDS; and much had been said under this head, of the cruelties they suffered, and of the hard labour they were obliged to undergo. Tales of oppression had been told, and narratives of ill usage had been related, which must undoubtedly shock the feelings of all who heard them; but was it fair, he asked, to infer from extraordinary instances, the general bad usage of the Slaves? Suppose that in the best cultivated government, a collection was to be made of the different abuses and cruelties that had been committed for a series of years; suppose that in this country such a collection had been made, and after the *brilliant panegyric that was made some time ago on our excellent Constitution*, some person had risen up, and had stated these, as proofs that our Constitution was very different from what it had been described; should we have thought ourselves justified in

inferring

inferring from a *certain number of extraordinary instances*, that we lived under a Government oppressive and tyrannical? —Should we not rather have answered, that in the most perfect system which the human intellect is capable of forming, some weaknesses, some defects must necessarily exist; and that it was unfair to draw inferences from extraordinary examples, to the prejudice of any system whatever? Having put this in the strongest light, he said, he had a right to draw the same inference with respect to the state of the Slaves in the WEST INDIA ISLANDS, who, from being Slaves, were necessarily exposed to certain *peculiar* disadvantages. He had a right to draw that inference, provided he could prove, that, notwithstanding any particular exception, the general behaviour of the planters or overseers towards the Slaves, could not have been such as the friends to the abolition had described to be.

Evidence has certainly been adduced, on both sides, and he should not be

afraid, if it were necessary, to oppose the evidence of those who have appeared in favour of the planters, against any evidence which had been adduced on the other side. He should not be afraid to oppose such characters as Lord RODNEY, Admiral BARRINGTON, Admiral HOTHAM, Sir JOSHUA ROWLEY, &c. against any authorities, however respectable, who may have come forward in favour of the abolition. But on no such evidence was it his intention to rest the argument; there were FACTS IN SUPPORT OF THAT EVIDENCE, WHICH MUST LEAVE IT WITHOUT DOUBT ON THE MINDS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Previous to the year 1730, the mortality, and consequently the decrease of the Slaves, in the West India Islands, was very considerable.

From the year 1730, to the year 1755, the deaths were reduced to only *two and a half per cent.* more than the births. From the year 1755, to the year 1768, they were reduced to only *one and three-fourths*

fourths more than the births. From the year 1768, to the year 1788, they were reduced to only *one per cent.* This then, on the first view of the subject, must prove that whatever may have been the situation of Slaves in former times, their condition has been gradually improved.

But if we consider the peculiar disadvantages under which they labour, if we consider the small proportion of females with respect to males, the *hurricanes*, and *famines* which have been the *consequence of those hurricanes, and which have swept away, in a short period, thousands of lives*; if we considered thus, that every natural obstacle seemed to combine to prevent the increase of the Slaves, we must have judged it PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE INCREASED IN THE MANNER, AND TO THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEY HAVE INCREASED, IF THE CRUEL TREATMENT THEY HAD SUFFERED, AND THE HARD LABOUR IMPOSED

IMPOSED UPON THEM, HAD BEEN SUCH AS THE FRIENDS OF THE ABOLITION HAD REPRESENTED.

This statement, he observed, not only enabled him to justify the WEST INDIA PLANTERS, from the aspersions that had been thrown out against them, but enabled him likewise to draw still more important conclusions;—That as the Slaves in the West India Islands had, under the present state of things, gradually increased, they would continue to increase.—That very few years would pass, not only before the *births were equal to the deaths*, but before they were *more numerous than the deaths*—That if this was likely to happen under the *present* state of things, *à fortiori*, it would follow that it must take place, if, by *certain regulations, the increase of the imported Slaves could be encouraged.*

Mr. Jenkinson having argued this important part of the subject in the most forcible manner (and which we feel, with

with regret), our inability to do justice to, then proceeded to remark, that the only doubt which could remain on the minds of gentlemen, was, whether it were more for the interest of the planter to *import*, or *breed*; for if he should be able to prove, that it was more for the interest of the planter to breed, it would then follow, that the moment the stock of Slaves in the islands was believed by the planters to be sufficient, that moment the further importation must necessarily cease.

In the first place, the gradual increase of the Slaves, of late years, clearly proved that the increase had been encouraged by the planter, and consequently must have conceived it to have been his *interest to breed*.

But he meant not to rest the argument on that ground.

The price of Slaves was of late years become so great (nearly, he believed he might say, *twice as great*, as they were twenty years ago), that the planter, on
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the grounds of œconomy, would feel it his interest not to purchase, if by any possible means he could avoid it.

Let us consider, then, said Mr. Jenkinson, that the greatest mortality is on the newly-imported Slaves—That the diseases they bring with them from AFRICA—the diseases they are likely to contract on the passage, the operations they have been said to undergo in the seasoning, all prove the considerable risk there must be in the purchase of Slaves, and that the planter is not only put to a very considerable expence, but is put to that expence, with a chance of very speedily losing the fruits of it.

To these considerations others might be added, no less important.—*Slaves bred in the islands are much more attached to the spot*—They have been gradually accustomed to the labour, and must consequently feel less objection to the performance of it. Trained up likewise in regular subordination, they must

must of course be much more manageable than those who are first put under the care of an overseer at a more advanced period of their life.

Slaves, on the other hand, who have been imported, are frequently persons who have been convicted of crimes, and may consequently be such as no person would be desirous of employing, if he could possibly avoid it. Let it be added to all these circumstances, that children are of the greatest service in many parts of the labour, so that whilst the planter must be convinced, that they will be the most valuable Slaves, when arrived at the age of maturity, he receives very considerable advantage from them, even in their earliest years.

It having then been proved, he said, that the *interest of the planter was to breed, rather than to import*, it must follow, that the planters would be little less than mad, to purchase Slaves, if they were not convinced that a further supply was necessary.

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But it had been said, that the births and the deaths in the islands were equal, and that consequently no further supply was wanted.

He was ready admit, that the births and the deaths were nearly equal, but the question must still come to this: Was the stock of Slaves in the islands sufficient? Suppose that in the island of JAMAICA there were 250,000 *Slaves*, and suppose, what he rather doubted, that number sufficient for the cultivation of the island; he yet ventured to assert, if the further importation was to be stopped, that the number of Slaves in the island was not sufficient; for Gentlemen seemed to have forgot, that persons in that climate are subject to diseases, of which we are ignorant, and which sweep away *hundreds*, nay *sometimes thousands at a time*. They seem to have forgot, that they are subject to *hurricanes and famines*, which have the same dreadful effects.

Whatever number of Slaves there
was

was necessary for the cultivation of the islands, if further importation was to be stopped, an extra number would be necessary, in order that, in case of any extraordinary mortality, from the circumstances already stated, the complete ruin of the planter might be prevented.

That the time would come, when the stock of Slaves in the island would be sufficient, no person, Mr. Jenkinson observed, who had attended to the former part of his argument could doubt. That the Slaves had gradually increased, were gradually increasing, and that by certain regulations the increase might be considerably promoted, must be equally obvious. But these were all considerations, which should induce us to oppose the Abolition, because the event, without any of the evils that might arise from the immediate adoption of that measure, must, in the natural order which he had described, take place in the course of a very short period.

Mr. Jenkinson then wished the Committee to consider, what mischiefs might

arise from the planters being able to smuggle. How dangerous it might be, that they should depend on other nations, and not on us, for their supply of Slaves—That from entering into bargains and contracts, perhaps even with our enemies, their dispositions might be alienated from us, THAT THE LOSS OF THE ISLANDS THEMSELVES MIGHT BE THE CONSEQUENCE; AND NOT ONLY THE LOSS OF SO MUCH REVENUE, AND SO MUCH POWER TO OURSELVES, BUT THE ACQUISITION OF THAT POWER, AND THAT REVENUE BY OUR ENEMIES—And why, said he, should we expose ourselves to such a risk? For any benefit which would result to the Negroes? On the contrary, *it had been proved that it would be a disadvantage to them.*

Let it likewise be considered, that we may deprive ourselves by these means of the power of enforcing regulations, and that thus the trade might go on as it does at present, with a much less rapid increase of the Slaves by birth,
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This was however, he continued to observe, not the only risk to which we were exposing our Colonies. Let us *reflect on the calamities of St. Domingo,* which have been imputed by the deputies from that island, to the *advocates of abolition.* What horror could be described, what ravage could be painted, what cruelty could be committed, which those unfortunate beings had not suffered? And should we, when principles of the same sort are lurking in our own islands, should we expose our fellow-subjects to the same calamities, who, *if guilty of promoting this trade, have at least been encouraged by ourselves, by Us, who, though parties in the guilt, would in no adequate degree be parties in the suffering?*

It had been said, that there was a distinction between the ABOLITION of the Slave Trade, and the EMANCIPATION of the Slaves. He admitted that distinction; but should they be surprised if the Slaves, who, receiving no
immediate

immediate benefit from the abolition of the trade, should complain that these principles were not equally applied to themselves ;—should they be surprised if their minds, not cultivated as our own, should not feel so *nice a distinction*, or at least, if they did feel it, would be too much interested to appear to do so.

That the Slave Trade was in itself an evil, Mr. Jenkinson said, he was ready to admit.

That the state of slavery itself was likewise an evil he was no less ready to admit.

That if the question was, *not to abolish*, but *establish* them, he, of all those who professed so much zeal for the interests of humanity, would not be the least eager to oppose it ; but, he demanded, were there not many evils in this world which we should have thought it our duty to prevent, yet which, when once they had taken place, it was more dangerous to oppose than to submit to ? *The duty of a Statesman was, not to consider abstractly*

abstractly what was right or wrong, but to weigh the disadvantages that were likely to arise from the abolition of an evil, against the consequences that were likely to arise from the continuance of it.

On this ground let us judge of the present question.

Here is an evil which, it has been proved, can be but of *short continuance*; the continuance of which, by *proper regulations*, may be *extremely shortened*. The extirpation of which, instead of being productive of GOOD, would be productive of ESSENTIAL HARM to those whom it is meant to benefit; and shall we, appearing to prevent the short continuance of this evil, adopt a measure which can be of *no advantage on one hand, and which threatens every calamity on the other*—which threatens a diminution of our revenue, and consequently a serious misfortune to the people of this country—which threatens the ruin of the property of those persons who, under *our encouragement*, have settled

tion in the West-India Islands—which threatens *murder*, and *all those cruelties* which, by the adoption of the measure, we are desirous of preventing.

Mr. Jenkinson concluded his speech, of which we profess only to delineate the grand outlines, in a manner worthy of the most serious attention at this æra of innovation.

He had frequently rejoiced at the idea, that some of those evils which had existed in all ages, and under all governments, were likely, in the PRESENT PERIOD, TO BE ABOLISHED; that we lived in an age where knowledge had become more universal than in any former period, and that, under the mild influence of true religion and philosophy, society was likely to receive considerable improvements. But he had always dreaded that those *improvements should be too rapid*—convinced that by this means their very end may be prevented.

Violent changes, he observed, shake the frame instead of supporting it. They endanger

endanger its existence ; and if the constitution out-lives the shock, it is restored weak and enfeebled.

Gradual changes strengthen and uphold it.

The *consequence* of the change, and not *the* change, is felt. Every step secures the preceding, and becomes the foundation for additional improvement.

Agreeing, then, most perfectly with the friends to the abolition in *their end*, he differed with them only in the *means of accomplishing that end*. He was desirous of doing that gradually, which they were desirous of doing rashly.

With that view he had drawn up two propositions on the subject, which, if the Committee would give him leave, he would state to them.

He then read his two propositions :

“ 1st. That an address be presented to his MAJESTY, that he
 Q “ would

“ would be pleased to recommend to
 “ the COLONIAL ASSEMBLIES, to grant
 “ premiums to such Planters and Over-
 “ seers as should distinguish them-
 “ selves by promoting the annual in-
 “ crease of the Slaves *by birth*. And
 “ likewise to grant freedom to every
 “ female Negro who had borne and
 “ reared up five children to the age
 “ of seven years.”

“ 2d. That a bounty of 5l. per
 “ head be given to the master of
 “ every vessel employed in the trade
 “ from the coast of Africa, who
 “ should import in any cargo, a
 “ greater number of female than male
 “ Negroes, not exceeding the age of
 “ twenty-five years.”

Mr. JENKINSON, in order, he said,
 that he might be enabled to bring for-
 ward his propositions in form, moved
 that the Chairman should leave the
 Chair.

Mr.

Mr. DUNDAS delivered a long and very ingenious speech, mostly in favour of the West-India Planters.

The two parties, he observed, at issue on the business, proceeded to extremities in the maintenance of their opinions. Those who were advocates for the Abolition, avowed their sentiments without any mental reservation; and those of a contrary disposition were actuated by the very opposite principles of reasoning. Hence appeared some difficulty in conciliating the disputants. While the nation was endeavouring to vindicate its honour and justice, the property of the Planters, who had embarked a large capital on *the faith of Parliament*, should remain inviolate. It therefore became the House to recollect the compact with the West-India merchants, which had been occasioned by many Acts of Parliament. On the adoption of moderate measures, he would offer a system which should carry in it the seeds of

Abolition. He then proposed certain regulations, or modifications, which would more effectually operate the wished-for event, than an abrupt or immediate Abolition. The *first* tended to increase the Native Negroes in the West Indies; the *second*, the immediate Abolition of Hereditary Slavery in the same islands; and the *third*, the Gradual Abolition, by a limited duration of the Slave Trade from Africa. Thus he would gradually and experimentally remove the fears and alarms of the Planters, and conciliate the esteem of the Abolitionists, without exposing the private property of many valuable individuals to the hazard of a mad theory. Addressing himself to the more moderate, he urged them to assist him in a conciliation of parties; and concluded with moving an amendment, by inserting the words—“ *Gradual Abolition,*” &c.

The SPEAKER, with much warmth, supported Mr. DUNDAS.

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The House at length divided on Mr. JENKINSON's motion—

Ayes	-	87
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Noes	-	234
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Majority	-	147
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A division then ensued on Mr. DUNDAS's amendment for a *Gradual* Abolition,

Ayes	-	193
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Noes	-	125
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Majority	-	68
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A third division followed on the question thus amended—

Ayes	-	230
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Noes	-	85
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Majority	-	145
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The question for the GRADUAL ABOLITION was then finally carried ; and the House adjourned at SEVEN o'clock in the morning.

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To the body of evidence which is here offered to the Public, in favour of the West India Merchants and Planters, the Editor will not presume to add any observations or comments of his own, convinced that should any be found so obstinate as to refuse assent to that evidence, “neither would they be persuaded even though one rose from the dead.”—*St. Luke.*

F I N I S.